An Abstract of a

LETTER

FROM

Thomas Paskell

OF

PENNSILVANIA

To his Friend J. J. of Chippenham.

MY kind love remembred unto Thee, and thy wife, and to all the rest of thy Family, hoping that you are all in good health, as through the goodness of God we all are at this present writing; Excepting one of my servants, who was a Carpenter, and a stout young man, he died on board the Ship, on our Voyage. I thank God I, and my Wife, have not been sick at all, but continued rather better than in *England*; and I do not find but the Country is healthfull, for there was a Ship that came the same day with us into the river, that lost but one Passenger in the Voyage, and that was their Doctor, who was ill when he came on board? and those people that came in since continue well. *William Penn* and those of the Society are arrived. *W. P.* is well approved of, he hath been since at *New Yorke*, and was extraordinarily entertained, and he behaved himself as Noble. Here is a place called *Philadelphia*, where is a Market kept, as also at *Upland*. I was at *Brillingsow-fair*, where I saw most sorts of goods to be sold, and a great resort of people; Where I saw *English* goods sold at very reasonable rates; The Country is full of goods, Brass and Pewter heth upon hand, That which sells best is Linnen cloath, trading Cloath for the *Indians*; I bought Kersey and it doth not sell, Broad Cloath is wanting, and Permiston, and Iron-potts: and as for the *Swedes*, they use but little Iron in Building, for they will build, and hardly use any other toole but an Ax; They will cut down a Tree, and cut him off when down, sooner then two men can saw him, and rend him into planks or what they please; only with the Ax and Wooden wedges, they use no Iron; They are generaly very ingenous people, lives well, they have lived here 40 Years, and have lived much at ease, having great plenty of all sorts of provisions, but then they weer but ordinarily Cloathed; but since the *English* came, they have gotten fine Cloaths, and are going proud. Let all people know that have any mind to come hither, that they provide Comfortable things for their passage, and also some provitions to serve them here, for although things are to be had at reasonable rates here, yet it is so far to fetch, that it spends much time, so that it's better to come provided for half a Year then to want one day; I thank God we have not wanted, but have fared well beyond what we did in *England*.

The River is taken up all along, by the *Swedes*, and *Finns*, and some *Dutch*, before the *English* came, neere eight score miles, and the *Englishmen* some of them, buy their Plantations, and get roome by the great River-side, and the rest get into *Creeks*, and small rivers that run into it, and some go into the Woods seven or eight Miles; *Thomas Colborne* is three miles in the Woods, he is well to pass, and hath about fourteen Acres of Corne now growing, and hath gotten between 30 and 40 li. by his Trade, in this short time. I have hired a House for my Family for the Winter, and I have gotten a little House in my Land for my servants, and have cleared Land about six Acres; and this I can say, I never wisht my self at *Bristol* again since my departure. I live in the *Schoolkill Creek*, near *Philadelphia*, about 100 Miles up the River. Here have been 24 Ships with Passengers within this Year, so that provisions are somewhat hard to come by in some places, though at no dear rate, there is yet enough in the River, but it is farre fetch, and suddainly there will be an Order taken for continuall supply. Now I shall give you an impartial account of the Country as I find it, as followeth When we came into *Delaware-bay*, we saw an infinite number of small fish in sholes, also large fish leaping in the Water: The River is a brave pleasant River, as can be desired, affording divers sorts of fish in great plenty, it's planted all along the Shoare, and in some *Creeks*, especialy in *Pensilvania* side, mostly by *Swaas*, *Finns*, and *Dutch*, and now at last, *English* throng in among them, and have filled all the Rivers and *Creeks* a great way in the Woods, and have settled about 160 Miles up the great River; some *English* that

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are above the falls, have ſowed this Year 30 or 40 buſhels of Wheat, and have great ſtocks of Cattel; Moſt of the *Sweads*, and *Finns* are ingenious people, they ſpeak *Engliſh*, *Sweed*, *Finn*, *Dutch* and the *Indian*; They plant but little *Indian* corne, not Tobacco; their Women make moſt of the Linnen cloath they wear, they Spinn and Weave it and make fine Linnen, and are many of them curious houſewives: The people generally eat Rye bread, being approved of beſt by them; not but that here is good Wheat, for I have eaten as good bread and drank as good drink as ever I did in *England*, as alſo very good butter and cheeſe, as moſt in *England*. Here is 3 ſorts of Wheat, as Winter, Summer, and Buck Wheat; the Winter Wheat they ſow at the fall, the Summer Wheat in March, theſe two ſorts are ripe in June; then having taken in this, tehy plow the ſame land, and ſow Buck Wheat, which is ripe in September: I have not given above 2s 6 d. *per* skipple, (which is 3 *Engliſh* pecks) for the beſt Wheat and that in goods which coſt little more then half ſo much in *England*, here is very good Rye at 2s *per* skipple, alſo Barly of 2 ſorts, as Winter, and Summer, at 4 Guilders *per* skipple; alſo Oats, and 3 ſorts of *Indian* Corne, (two of which ſorts they can Malt and make good beer of as of Barley,) at four Guilders *per Skipple*, a *Guilder* is four pence halfpenny. I have bought good Beef, Porke, and Mutton at two pence *per pound* and ſome cheaper, alſo *Turkeys* and *Wild-geeſe* at the value of two or three Pound of Shot apeice, and *Ducks* at one Pound of Shot, or the like value, and in great plenty: here is great ſtore of poultry, but for *Curlews*, *Pidgeons*, and *Pheſants*, they will hardly beſtow a ſhot upon them. I have Veniſon of the *Indians* very cheap, although they formerly ſold it as cheap again to the *Sweeds*; I have four *Deer* for two yards of trading cloath, which coſt five ſhillings, and moſt times I purchaſe it cheaper; We had *Bears-fleſh* alſo ſalt for little or nothing, it is good food, taſting much like Beef; There have been many *Horſes* ſold of late to *Barbadoes*, and here is plenty of *Rum*, *Sugar*, *Ginger*, and *Melaſſes*. I was lately at * *Bridlington-fair*, where were a great reſort of people, with Cattle and all ſorts of Goods, ſold at very reaſonable rates.

* In New-*Jerſey*.

Here are Gardens with all ſorts of Herbs, and ſome more then in *England*, alſo *Gooſe-berries* and *Roaſeroves*, but what other Flowers I know not yet: *Turnips*, *Parſnips*, and *Cabbages*, beyond Compare. Here are *Peaches* in abundance of three ſorts I have ſeen rott on the Ground, and the Hogs eate them, they make good Spirits from them, alſo from *Cornt* and *Cherries*, and a ſort of wild *Plums* and *Grapes*, and moſt people have Stills of *Copper* for that uſe. Here are *Apples*, and *Pears*, of ſeveral ſorts, *Cheries*, both Black and Red, and *Plums*, and *Quinces*; in ſome places *Peach Stones* grow up to bear in three Years: the Woods are full of *Oakes*, many very high and ſtreight, many of them about two foot through, and ſome bigger, but very many leſs; A *Sweed* will tell twelve of the bigger in a day; Here are brave *Poplar*, *Beach*, *Aſh*, *Lyme-trees*, *Gum-trees*, *Hickary-trees*, *Saſafras*, *Wallnuts*, and *Cheſnuts*, *Hazel*, and *Mulberies*: Here growes in the Woods abundance of *Wattle-beries*, or *Whorts*, *Strawberries* and *Blackberies*, better then in *England*, as alſo three ſorts of *Grapes* and *Plums*; Here is but few *Pine-trees*, and *Ceder*; Here is good *Fireſtone* plenty enough in moſt places: and the Woods are full of runs of water. I have lately ſeen ſome *Salt*, very good to ſalt meat with, brought by an *Indian* out of the Woods: they ſay there is enough of it: but for *Minnerals* or *Mettals*, I have not ſeen any, except it be *Marcaſite*, ſuch as they make *Vitriol* or *Copperis* with in *England*. Here are *Beavers*, *Racoons*, *Woolves*, *Bears*, a ſort of *Lyons*, *Polcatts*, *Muſkratts*, *Elks*, *Minks*, *Squirills* of ſeveral ſorts and other ſmall Creatures, but none of theſe hurt unleſs ſurpriſed: alſo *Rattle Snakes* and *black Snakes*, but the *Rattle Snaks* I have not ſeen, though I have rambled the Woods much theſe three Months, ſince the beginning of *September*. The *Indians* are very quiet and peaceable, having their underſtandings, and qualifications, and when abuſed will ſeek revenge, they live much better ſince the *Engliſh* came; getting neceſſarys as cheap again as formerly, and many of them begin to ſpeake *Engliſh*. I have heard one ſay, *Sweed no good*, *Dutch man no good*, but *Engliſhman good*. William Penn is ſettling people in Towns. There are Markets kept in two Towns viz. *Philadelphia*, being Chiefeſt, *Cheſter*, formrely called *Upland*. To write of the Seaſons of the Year I cannot, bun ſince I came it hath been very pleaſant weather. The Land is generally good and yet there is ſome but ordinary and barren ground. Here are *Swamps* which the *Sweads* prize much, and many people will want: And one thing more I ſhall tell you, I know a man together with two or three more, that have happened upon a piece of Land of ſome Hundred Acres, that is all cleare, without Trees, Buſhes, ſtumps, that may be Plowed without let, the farther a man goes in the Country the more ſuch Land they find. There is alſo good Land, full of Large and ſmall Trees, and ſome good Land, but few Trees on it. The Winter is ſharp and the Cattel are hard to keep. The people that come muſt work and know Country laſſairs; They muſt be provided with ſome proviſions for ſome time in the Country, and alſo ſome to help along on Board the Ship. I have more to write, but am ſhortned in time. *Vale.*

Penſilvania, the laſt of January, 168$\frac{2}{3}$ Thomas Paskell.

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